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Lockheed Martin's F-16 is the world's most popular fighter jet, Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Top 10 Most Popular Fighter Jets in the World



Lockheed Martin F-16 Falcon



The most popular fighter jet on the planet, Lockheed Martin's F-16 boasts a 15% global market share – 2,281 planes total.



Boeing F-18 Hornet



Photo : Wikimedia Commons

Boeing's F-18 Hornet, in its many variations, runs a distant second: 1,008 units in service. That's still 7% of the global fighter jet market.



Boeing F-15 Eagle



Photo : Wikimedia Commons

**Add the 865
Boeing F-15s in
service around
the globe, to its
1,008 F-18s,
and...
Lockheed's
F-16 would still
be the world's
favorite.**



Mikoyan MiG-29 Fulcrum



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

At a low, low price tag of just \$29 million, Russia's MiG-29 is gaining popularity.

The 857 MiG-29s in service tie it with the F-15 at 6% global market share.



Sukhoi Su-27 Flanker



Photo : Wikimedia Commons

Combine Russia's Su-27 with updated variants the Su-30, -33, and -35, and together they make for the 5th most popular fighter plane on the planet – 5% market share, with 845 planes flying.



Mikoyan MiG-21 Fishbed



Photo : Wikimedia Commons

Russia's MiG-21s are not aging well. 95 have been taken out of circulation since last year, leaving just 698 in operation.

That's still a 5% market share.



Sukhoi Su-25 Frogfoot



Sukhoi's Su-25 is gaining in popularity, too. 20 new planes have been added to global fleets since 2013, lifting the "Frogfoot" to 507 planes globally – a 3% market share.



Northrop Grumman F-5 Tiger



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

An oldie but a goodie, 492 old Northrop F-5 Tigers are still tooling around – 3% of all fighter jets in existence.



Chengdu F-7 Airguard



Photo : Wikimedia Commons

Making its debut on the top 10 list this year is China's F-7, a twin to Mikoyan's MiG-21, and the export version of China's J-7 fighter jet. 460 copies are in service, giving the F-7 a 3% market share globally.



Sukhoi Su-24 Fencer



Bringing up the rear in 10th place is Russia's Su-24 Fencer. It has 3% market share with 423 planes flying. That's 50 fewer than last year.



In the fighter jet market, market *share* is crucial.

It is hard to overstate its importance.

The more planes a company builds, and sells, the broader the “base” over which it can spread research & development costs – and the lower the price it can charge per plane.

And the lower the cost per plane... the easier it is to sell more of them, growing market share even further.



Lockheed Martin has sold more than 4,500 F-16s!

And more than half of them are still flying today.

At an estimated cost of just \$34 million, the F-16's latest iteration, the "F-16V" can compete on price with the most advanced offerings from Russia and China.

And even at this price, Lockheed Martin continues to earn 7% profit margins.



7% net profit.

That's more than Boeing gets.

And more than Textron, too.

And now, Lockheed Martin is ramping up its
biggest project yet.



The F-35 Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter.

Priced north of \$100 million today, the F-35 costs three times as much as an F-16...

... but only a little more than an F-15 or F/A-18 from Boeing.

And Lockheed expects to sell more than 3,000 F-35s over the next 60 years.



As F-35 production ramps, prices will fall.

Today, the F-35 accounts for about 20% of the revenues Lockheed Martin takes in.

But as the program grows, the F-35 could ultimately account for 50% of Lockheed Martin's business.

So, if you were wondering why Lockheed Martin shares are up 55% over the past year, while Textron is up only 50%, and Boeing only 35%...



Now you know.



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